

**CLAIMS**

1. A methyl ethyl hydroxyethyl cellulose ether,  
characterized in that the cellulose ether has a flocculation  
5 temperature of 70-95°C, a DS-methyl of 0.1-0.8 and a DS-ethyl  
of 0.1-0.7.

2. A cellulose ether according to claim 1, characterized in  
that it has a MS-hydroxyethyl of 1.5-2.8.

3. A cellulose ether according to claim 1, characterized in  
10 that it has a DS-methyl of 0.2-0.6, a DS-ethyl of 0.2-0.6 and  
a MS-hydroxyethyl of 1.7-2.5.

4. A cellulose ether according to claim 3, characterized in  
that it has a flocculation temperature of 78-85°C.

5. A cellulose ether according to any one of claims 1-4,  
15 characterized in that it also contains substituents selected  
from the group consisting of hydroxypropyl and substituents  
containing hydrocarbon groups of 4-22 carbon atoms.

6. A process for manufacturing the methyl ethyl hydroxy-  
ethyl cellulose ether according to any one of claims 1-5,  
20 characterized in that cellulose is mercerized in one or  
several steps with aqueous alkali in a total amount of 0.8-  
1.8 moles of alkali per mole saccharide unit; and ethylene  
oxide in a total amount of 2.6-5.5 moles per mole saccharide  
unit, methyl chloride in a total amount of 0.2-1.5 moles per  
25 mole saccharide unit and ethyl chloride in a total amount of  
0.2-1.5 moles per mole saccharide unit are added to and  
reacted with the mercerized cellulose in one or several steps  
in the presence of an organic reaction medium at a  
temperature from 50-120°C.

7. A process according to claim 6, characterized in that  
30 the reaction medium is ethyl chloride.

8. A process according to claim 6 or 7, characterized in that the cellulose is initially mercerized with a portion of the total amount of alkali; a portion of the total amount of ethylene oxide, a portion of or the total amount of methyl chloride and a portion of or the total amount of ethyl chloride, if ethyl chloride is not present as a reaction medium, are added to and reacted with the initially mercerized cellulose in one or several steps at a temperature from 50-120°C, whereupon the partially substituted mercerized cellulose is further mercerized with the remaining portion of the alkali; and the remaining portion of the ethylene oxide and any remaining portion of methyl chloride and any remaining portion of ethyl chloride, if ethyl chloride is not present as a reaction medium, are added to and reacted with the further mercerized cellulose in one or several steps at a temperature from 50-120°C.

9. An aqueous formulation containing 0.1-2.5% by weight of the cellulose ether defined in any one of the claims 1-5.

10. An aqueous formulation according to claim 9,

characterized in that the formulation is a waterborne paint composition containing a latex binder.

11. Use of a methyl ethyl hydroxyethyl cellulose defined in claims 1-5 as a thickener or rheology modifier in a water-phase.